

In the Claims

For the convenience of the Examiner, all pending claims are set forth below, whether or not an amendment is made. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Computer apparatus configured to discover roles from structure existing amongst users to whom resources have been assigned, the apparatus comprising:

a processor,

a discovery unit, operable via said processor, configured for searching for patterns within links between users and resources partitioned into a set of nodes of users and a set of nodes of resources, wherein:

each user of said set of nodes of users comprises a node with an assignment of resources from the set of nodes of resources, and

the links comprise said assignments between respective users and resources,

a grouping unit, associated with said discovery unit, configured to use said discovered patterns to form at least one group from said user nodes or said resource nodes using said discovered patterns, such ~~that~~ that:

users or resources having all ~~of~~ or a subset of at least two links to common resources or users are automatically determined to be placed into a same group, and

the users or resources of the at least one group did not exist as a group prior to the discovery unit searching for patterns within the links, and

an output unit configured for outputting said at least one group of users or resources as a role.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said links comprise ~~relationships are~~ access permissions.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said links comprise ~~relationships are~~ usage levels of respective resources by respective users.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said links ~~relationships~~ further comprise user access permission levels for respective resources.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said ~~at least one group~~ role is definitive of a user role on said network.

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said user nodes comprise entities having attributes, and said ~~relationships represent~~ links comprise a respective user possessing a respective attribute.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said discovery unit is associated with a search engine operable to use a search tree to begin with a single resource and its associated users, and iteratively to add resources and remove users not having a predefined relationship with said iteratively added resources, to meet a resource number, or a user number constraint.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said search engine is operable to use a homogeneity measure to determine whether to consider a candidate grouping in said search.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said search engine is operable to use a homogeneity measure to determine in which order to consider a candidate grouping in said search.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said search engine is operable within said iterative stages to add further resources common to a current set of users.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said search engine is operable to compute a set of all users related to a current set of resources.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said search engine is operable to consider for expansion all resources outside said current set of resources that have at least one relationship connection with a current set of users.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the set of users associated with each of said nodes is associated with attributes, and wherein said homogeneity measure is the percentage of occurrence of a given attribute, multiplied by the log value thereof, summed over all such users in said result.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the set of resources associated with each of said nodes is associated with attributes, and wherein said homogeneity measure is the percentage of occurrence of a given attribute, multiplied by the log value thereof, summed over all such resources in said result.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said homogeneity measure is the percentage of occurrence of a given resource relationship for any of the users associated with at least one of the resources of said node, multiplied by the log value thereof, summed over all users of said node in said result.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said homogeneity measure is the percentage of occurrence of a given user relationship for any of the resources associated with at least one of the users of said node, multiplied by the log value thereof, summed over all resources of said node in said result.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said discovery unit is operable to use said pattern recognition within an iterative tree searching process.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said discovery unit is operable to insert said groupings as an intermediate set amongst said nodes.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said users and said resources are arranged into three sets, an intermediate one of said sets comprising predetermined relationship dependent groupings of at least some of the users in a first of said sets, said discovery unit being operable to use said pattern recognition to add new groups to said intermediate set.

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a graphical expositor operable to graphically represent said user nodes and said resource nodes within said sets.

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the graphical expositor is user interactive to manually modify the groupings discovered by the discovery unit.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said graphical expositor is further operable to partition the graph into sub-graphs, each of the sub-graphs itself being a partitioned graph having at least two sets, the sub-graphs being limited to a subset of the users in one of the sets, and further comprising all the resources in the other set that are linked to users of said subset, and wherein said discovery unit is further operable to perform groupings on each of the subgraphs, and then to merge the results into a full graph.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said graphical expositor is further operable to partition the graph into sub-graphs, each of the sub-graphs itself being a bi-partite graph limited to a subset of the resources in the second set, and further comprising all the users in the first set that are linked thereto, and wherein said discovery unit is further operable to perform groupings on each of the subgraphs, and then to merge the results into a full graph.

24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said graphical expositor, is user interactive to allow an operator to review user group associations and user resource relations, and to allow said operator to manipulate user access rights.

25. (Currently Amended) Role discovery method for electronically grouping nodes according to existing relationships with resources, the method comprising:

discovering existing relationship patterns between an arrangement of nodes and resources across a partition between said nodes and resources, wherein the patterns are discovered from predetermined relationships between ones of said resources and corresponding nodes,

using said discovered patterns, automatically determining groupings of ~~grouping~~ said arrangement of nodes, wherein nodes within said ~~grouped—nodes~~ groupings share relationships with at least two common resources,

wherein the nodes of each of the groupings did not exist as a group prior to discovering the existing relationship patterns, and

outputting said grouping of nodes having common patterns of at least two existing relationships as a role.

26. (Currently Amended) A device for discovering existing structure in a partitioned arrangement of nodes and resources wherein nodes have relationships with various of said resources, the device comprising:

a processor,

a discovery unit configured to work with said processor, for discovering relationship patterns within existing relationships between a partitioned arrangement of said nodes and said resources, wherein:

the arrangement comprises at least two sets, and

the existing relationships comprise predetermined relationships defined between said nodes and said resources across said sets, and

the discovery unit uses pattern recognition on said nodes, said resources and said predetermined relationships,

a node-grouping unit associated with said pattern recognition unit and configured to operate with said processor to use said discovered relationship patterns to ~~form~~ automatically determine groups from said nodes, such ~~that~~ that:

those nodes that share similar subsets of at least two relationships with said resources are placed in a group together, and

the nodes of each group of said groups did not exist as a group prior to discovering the relationship patterns, and

an output configured to output respective groups of nodes having said similar subsets of at least two relationships as roles.

27. (Currently Amended) A computer device comprising:

- a processor,
- a first series of user definitions, each user in said definitions defined as a user node;
- a second series of resource definitions, each resource in said definitions defined as a resource node;
- access data indicating access of users to respective resources;
- a pattern recognition unit operable with said processor for recognizing pre-existing patterns in said access data, said patterns indicative of a way of grouping said user nodes of said each user so as to discover groups of user nodes having common subsets of access data related to at least two resources,

wherein the user nodes of the discovered groups did not exist as a group prior to recognizing the pre-existing patterns in the access data, and

- a group definition unit operable with said processor and said pattern recognition unit configured to output groups so discovered as roles.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) Pattern recognition apparatus for grouping nodes according to relationships with other nodes, the apparatus comprising:

a pattern recognition processor for using pattern recognition on links between nodes partitioned into a first set and a second set to find relationship patterns within said links, and from said patterns to ~~form~~ automatically determine at least one group from nodes of said first set, wherein said nodes being formed into said group share relationships with at least two nodes in said second set,

wherein the nodes of the at least one group did not exist as a group prior to using pattern recognition on the links, and

wherein the links define relationships across said partition between nodes in the first set and the second set.

30. (Currently Amended) A group discovery method, comprising:

electronically searching for links between nodes partitioned into a first data set and a second data set, wherein: said links exist between nodes in the first data set and nodes in the second data set, and

automatically determining a grouping of nodes in said first set according to respective links found by the electronic searching such that all nodes in said first set having links to at least two commonly held nodes in said second set are assigned to a same group, thereby discovering groups in said ~~data~~ data, and

wherein the nodes of the grouping did not exist as a group prior to electronically searching for the links.

31. (Currently Amended) A method of grouping users having links or attributes into one or more groups based on said links or attributes, the method comprising:

searching for the links or attributes of the users, wherein the links or attributes of each user characterize an association between the user and a resource;

~~providing~~ automatically determining a group for users sharing all ~~of~~ or a subset of at least two of said links or attributes discovered by the searching step,

wherein the users of the group did not exist as a group prior to searching for the links,
and

outputting said automatically determined ~~provided groups.~~ group.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said discovery unit is configured to carry out said searching by one member of the group consisting of a clustering algorithm, an incremental search and a search tree.

33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said outputting said group comprises outputting a characteristic of said group.

34. (Currently Amended) A search method comprising:

electronically searching data comprising nodes partitioned into first and second data sets, wherein links exist within said data between nodes in said first data set and nodes in said second data set, such links being discovered as a result of the electronic searching, and

automatically determining grouping groupings of nodes in said first set according to respective links discovered as a result of the electronic searching such that all nodes in said first set having links to at least two commonly held nodes in said second set are assigned to a same ~~group~~ group, and

wherein the nodes of each group in the groupings of nodes did not exist as a group prior to electronically searching the data.

35. (Currently Amended) A search apparatus for searching existing electronically held data, said electronically held data comprising nodes partitioned into first and second data sets, wherein links exist within said data between nodes in said first data set and nodes in said second data set the apparatus comprising:

a search unit, configured for electronically searching for links within data comprising nodes partitioned into first and second data sets, wherein said links exist within said data between nodes in said first data set and nodes in said second data set, and

a structuring unit, associated with said search unit, configured for automatically determining grouping groupings of nodes in said first set according to respective links discovered by the search unit such that all nodes in said first set having links to at least two commonly held nodes in said second set are assigned to a same group, thereby discovering groups in said ~~data~~ data,

wherein the nodes of each group in the groupings of nodes did not exist as a group prior to electronically searching for the links within the data.